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COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT

TOPIC Fall Exercises of the First Gds Mecz Army in the Muehlberg-Zeithain Area

EVALUATION

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DATE OF CONTENT

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED 14 October 1955

REFERENCES

PAGES 4 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

REMARKS

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This is UNEVALUATED Information

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1. On 24 September 1955, an observation post for generals and high-ranking officers was under construction at the Muehlberg engineer training site west of the dirt road on the edge of the woods next to the Elbe River. River-crossing practices were apparently to be held near the observation post. The western bank of the river was marked by white flags in a width of approximately 500 meters. Three large and 3 small motorboats were anchored on the eastern bank near Kaitzschhaeuser. Trucks

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Between 0400 and 1830 on 25 September, the Elbe River was restricted in the area of Kreinitz. At about 0800, intensive tank firing was heard from the engineer training site. Four jet aircraft were continually seen over the training area. At about 0900, 6 biplanes crossed the area and proceeded toward Dresden. At 1300, the roads were no longer restricted. At about 1300, 25 T-34/85 tanks, 4 salvage tanks, 6 trucks, each with a 85-mm AA gun, 5 trucks each with a 37-mm AA gun, 8 trucks with AA machine guns, 20 to 25 M-3 armored personnel carriers, 8 to 10 four-wheel armored personnel carriers, and 30 to 35 trucks including tank, radio and repair shop trucks were seen some 300 meters east of the sheep-farm. Five JS-2 tanks, 1 command tank and 1 salvage tank were seen in the woods west of the road. Nine JSU-152 guns were seen in the middle of this woods. Twelve to 15 T-34/85 tanks, 4 JSU-122 guns, 2 JSU guns without guns and 4 salvage tanks were observed on the eastern bank of the river at the river crossing point.

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2. The pontoon bridge, which had presumably been used for the crossing, had already been dismantled. Fragments were seen on the eastern bank of the river. Trucks were parked not far from the bridge construction site. Eight to 10 sedans were seen in the Elbe meadow. An additional 40 to 50 trucks were seen on the western bank of the river.

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3. On 25 September, 12 rocket launchers were identified east of the Elbe River, 1 km north of Kaitzschhaeuser. Numerous trucks were stored in the woods on the western border of the Zeithain training grounds. At about 1400, 18 T-34/85 tanks [redacted] passed through Cohlis. The tanks came from the engineer training site and proceeded to the wood patch opposite the Roederau railroad station. Four JSU-122 guns, 2 JSU-guns without guns and 5 salvage tanks went in the same direction. At 1800, a signal unit was seen marching from the Muehlberg engineer training grounds through Riessa toward Seerhausen. The column included 10 four-wheel armored personnel carriers, 3 M-3 armored personnel carriers, each occupied by 8 to 10 soldiers, who wore blue-bordered black epaulets with signal insignia, 5 radio trucks and 10 to 15 trucks [redacted]. It was learned that, after 1600, units continually left in this direction. At 1900, 8 trucks, each with a 57-mm AT gun and 12 trucks with personnel wearing red-bordered black epaulets left the Zeithain training grounds for Grossenhain. At 2100, 5 trucks, each with a 85-mm AA gun, 4 trucks, each with a 122-mm field howitzer, 5 half-track vehicles and some 50 trucks including radio, tank and repair shop trucks proceeded in the same direction. At about 1400 on 26 September, the vehicles which had arrived from the engineer training site on 25 September were observed in a camp on the northeastern edge of the woods at the Zeithain tank firing area. The following vehicles were seen: 15 T-34/85 tanks, 5 JS-2 tanks, 4 salvage tanks, 4 trucks, each with a 37-mm AA gun, 10 to 15 M-3 armored personnel carriers, 5 four-wheel armored personnel carriers and 25 to 30 trucks. At 1600, the above-mentioned T-34/85 tanks [redacted] and several other vehicles went to the Kuelknitz railroad station for entraining. At 1645, 18 T-34/85 tanks, 4 JSU-122 guns without guns, 5 salvage tanks, 2 armored personnel carriers, 3 trucks and 2 field kitchens came from the wood patch near the Roederau railroad station and went to the station for entraining.

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4. On 21 and 22 September, 4 jeeps, 3 trucks, 47 six-wheel armored personnel carriers, 18 sidecar motorcycles, some 800 soldiers wearing black-bordered crimson epaulets and 300 soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets left the Elsner Kaserne (1401) and the Strassburg Kaserne (1402) in Grimma and went toward Gross Bothen. Three troop trains passed through the Oberer Bahnhof in Grimma. They carried 12 guns and six-wheel armored personnel carriers which mounted heavy machine guns and 76-mm guns with short barrels. One of the trains was occupied by soldiers and, apparently, by Russian women and children. On 23 September, all was quiet at the post and the installations. It was noted that only a few windows of the barracks installations were lit at dusk.
5. At 0800 on 28 September, the following troops and materiel were unloaded at the Leipzig-Teucha railroad station: 6 T-34 tanks, 2 M-3 armored personnel carriers, 3 BA-64 armored scout cars,

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8 sidecar motorcycles, 2 tank trucks, 5 trucks, 1 closed trailer, ambulance, 1 jeep, 8 boxcarloads of straw mattresses and billeting equipment and approximately 100 soldiers. At 1000 on 22 September, a train which carried 18 T-34 tanks, 3 BA-64 armored scout cars, 4 sidecar motorcycles, 1 armored personnel carrier, 1 tractor and approximately 10 trucks and 12 boxcarloads of personnel passed through the Taucha railroad station. The train came from the direction of Eilenburg and proceeded toward Leipzig.¹ At 1530, 1 JSU-122 gun, 1 JS-2 tank and 4 T-34 tanks from the Heiterblick Kaserne (8242) in Leipzig were entrained at the Taucha railroad station. 2

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6. On 28 September, 10 boxcars with billeting equipment and baggage which was taken to the Heiterblick Kaserne near Leipzig, were seen at the Taucha railroad station. 1
7. On 22, 26 and 30 September, the Panzer Kaserne (1162) in Borna, which has a capacity of an estimated 1,000 to 1,200 soldiers, was occupied by some 200 soldiers, presumably an advance detail. Fourteen to 24 trucks were parked in the barracks yard. Most of the doors of the vehicle sheds were closed. The few sheds, the doors of which were open, were empty. Intensive pedestrian traffic was observed at the installation. On 30 September, billeting equipment was unloaded from 5 trucks.

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1. Comment. Recent information from the Muehlberg-Zeithain maneuver area tends to indicate that the exercise observed there was not connected with the assembly of units in the Moyerswerda-Weisswasser-Bautzen area as had previously been assumed.

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this was a joint exercise of the 8th Gds Mecz Div and the 9th Tank Div with crossing of the Elbe River in the Muehlberg-Riesa area. The information fails to definitely indicate whether the Elbe River was crossed on a military bridge or by means of ferries. For information on participation of an engineer unit of GSFG from Sperenberg,

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The six-wheel armored personnel carriers with short 76-mm guns seen on the shipments on 21 and 22 September in Grimma are worth noting. Armored personnel carriers with a similar armament have not been observed before in the Soviet Zone of Germany. The third shipment mentioned in paragraph 2, which reportedly carried soldiers, women and children, was presumably dispatched in connection with the personnel exchange.

2. [REDACTED] Comment. The tanks and the SF gun presumably belonged to the 67th Tank Tng Bn of the 8th Gds Mecz Div and may have been loaded for repair work or overhauling.

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3. [REDACTED] Comment. After the departure of the 1st Gds Tank Regt of the 8th Gds Mecz Div to the Koenigsbrueck training grounds in the spring of 1955, the Panzer Kaserne in Borna was occupied by only a guard detail of about 50 men until early September. Advance details of the regiment presumably returned to the post. While the units are expected to return to the installation only after the completion of the fall exercise. Compare with [REDACTED] Comment 1.

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Motor vehicle [REDACTED] are believed to belong to the u/i signal unit of CSFG in Rehagen [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] This may indicate that this unit also participated in the exercise in the Muehlberg-Zeithain area.

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